

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

1. (currently amended) A retractor comprising:

a frame having a first guide receiving channel;

a first tissue retaining wall ~~coupled to a first guide receiving channel;~~

a second tissue retaining wall movably coupled to the first tissue retaining wall, wherein one of the first tissue retaining wall and the second tissue retaining wall is coupled to the frame; and

a first guide having an end, the first guide being sized and dimensioned ~~at one end~~ to be received within the first guide receiving channel, the ~~and at another~~ end being sized and dimensioned to be insertable ~~inserted~~ into a first area of bone.

2. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 1, wherein each of the retaining walls has a substantially flat side.

3. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 1, wherein the first and second retaining walls are nested relative to one another.

4. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 1, wherein at least one of the retaining walls has a curved bottom edge.

5. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 1, wherein at least one of the retaining walls has a compliant bottom edge.

6. (currently amended) A retractor comprising:

a frame having a first guide receiving channel;

a first tissue retaining wall;

a second tissue retaining wall movably coupled to the first tissue retaining wall, wherein one of the first tissue retaining wall and the second tissue retaining wall is coupled to the frame;

a first guide having an end, the first guide being sized and dimensioned to be received within the first guide receiving channel, the end being sized and dimensioned to be insertable into a first area of bone; and

~~The retractor of claim 1, further comprising a hinge that joins couples~~ the first and second retaining walls.

7. (currently amended) The retractor of claim 1, ~~wherein the further comprising a~~ frame ~~includes having~~ a mechanism that holds the retaining walls apart from each other.

8. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 1, wherein the first guide receiving channel comprises a slot.

9. (currently amended) The retractor of claim 8, further ~~comprising including a~~ frame ~~and a second guide receiving channel, wherein both of the second~~ guide receiving channels are ~~being~~ disposed in the frame.

10. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 9, wherein at least one of the guide receiving channels is slotted.

11. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the retractor is substantially transparent.

12. (previously presented) The retractor of claim 1, further comprising a web that couples distal portions of the retaining walls.

13. (currently amended) A retractor comprising:
a frame having a first guide receiving channel;
a first tissue retaining wall;
a second tissue retaining wall movably coupled to the first tissue retaining wall, wherein one of
the first tissue retaining wall and the second tissue retaining wall is coupled to the frame;
a first guide having an end, the first guide being sized and dimensioned to be received within the
first guide receiving channel, the end being sized and dimensioned to be insertable into a first area of
bone; and

~~The retractor of claim 1, further comprising~~ a plurality of removable finger processes extending from distal portions of one of the first and second retaining walls.

14. (cancelled)

15. (previously presented) The retractor system of claim 1, wherein the first guide is held in place with respect to the bone by a screw.

16. (currently amended) The retractor system of claim 1, further comprising ~~a frame and a clamp or nut that cooperates with the first guide to assist in holding the frame in position relative to the bone.~~

17. (previously presented) The retractor system of claim 1, wherein the retractor has a second guide receiving channel spaced apart from the first guide receiving channel, and further comprising a second guide sized and dimensioned at one end to be received within the second guide receiving channel, and at another end to be inserted into a second area of bone.

18. (previously presented) The retractor system of claim 17, wherein the second guide is held in place with respect to the bone by a second screw.

19. (currently amended) A retractor comprising:
a frame having a first guide receiving channel;
a first tissue retaining wall;
a second tissue retaining wall movably coupled to the first tissue retaining wall, wherein one of the first tissue retaining wall and the second tissue retaining wall is coupled to the frame;
a first guide having an end, the first guide being sized and dimensioned to be received within the first guide receiving channel, the end being sized and dimensioned to be insertable into a first area of bone; and

~~The retractor system of claim 1, further comprising an expander having a handle and sloped walls.~~

20. (currently amended) A method of inserting a tissue retractor into a patient, comprising:
- providing a retractor having paired tissue retracting surfaces and first and second guide receiving areas;
- percutaneously implanting first and second guides into ~~areas of~~ different areas of bone in the patient;
- positioning upper ends of the first and second guides through the first and second guide receiving areas, respectively, thereby inserting the retractor into tissue of the patient; and
- moving the tissue retracting surfaces apart from one another independently of the first and second guides.
21. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of implanting comprises screwing the first guide into a pedicle of a vertebra.
22. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of implanting comprises inserting the first and second guides into different bones.
23. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising stabilizing the retractor on the guides using a wire.
24. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the tissue retracting surfaces are substantially continuous.

25. (new) The retractor of claim 1, wherein the first tissue retaining wall is moveable coupled to the second tissue retaining wall via a living hinge.

26. (new) The retractor of claim 1, wherein the first tissue retaining wall and the second tissue retaining wall are moveable from a first position to a second position, the first and second tissue retaining walls are substantially flat when in the first position.

27. (new) The retractor of claim 1, wherein the first tissue retaining wall and the second tissue retaining wall are substantially continuous so that the first and second tissue retaining walls form a substantially continuous wall.